

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 FEA-01 AGR-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00

DODE-00 EB-07 FRB-03 H-01 INR-07 INT-05 L-02 LAB-04

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 AID-05 CIEP-01 SS-15 STR-01

TAR-01 TRSE-00 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 OMB-01 /086 W

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P R 281800Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7530

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

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E.O. 11652 - N/A

TAGS: ETRD, OAS, IA-ECOSOC, ES

SUBJ: US TRADE ACT AND IA-ECOSOC MEETING

REF: STATE 035339

GUATEMALA ALSO FOR ROCAP

1. WE DISCUSSED WITH ECONOMIC MINISTER HIDALGO QUEHL ON FEBRUARY 26 OUR CONCERNS ABOUT THE FORTHCOMING MEETING OF IA-ECOSOC AS CONVEYED IN REFTEL. THE MINISTER EVIDENCED UNDERSTANDING BUT OFFERED NO COMMENT ABOUT GOES POSITION. HE SAID HE COULD NOT ATTEND DUE TO OTHER COMMITMENTS AND THAT IT WOULD BE DETERMINED AT THE NEXT MEETING OF THE CABINET-LEVEL ECONOMIC COMMITTEE WHO, IF ANYONE, WOULD ATTEND FROM HERE. HE WOULD NOT RULE OUT THE POSSIBLE ATTEDANCE OF FINANCE MINISTER MARTINEZ. WE PLAN WISCUSS IN GREAT DEPTH USG CONCERNS WITH WHOMEVER IS DESIGNATED TO ATTEND.

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2. DURING THE COURSE OF A CALL ON FOREIGN MINISTER BORGONOVO

FEB 25, THE AMBASSADOR REFERRED TO THE IA-ECOSOC MEETING AND EXPRESSED OUR HOPE THAT IT WOULD RESULT IN AN OBJECTIVE, CONSTRUCTIVE DISCUSSION OF THE TRADE ACT IN CONTRAST WITH PREVIOUS OAS COUNCIL ACTION. BORGONOVO HAD NOT GIVEN THE IA-ECOSOC MEETING MUCH THOUGHT BUT HE SAID THAT THE TRADE ACT HAD BEEN STUDIED THOROUGHLY AND ITS BENEFITS WERE CLEARLY PERCEIVED. THE FOREIGN MINISTER STATED THAT THE EL SALVADOR DELEGATE TO THE MEETING WOULD BE INSTRUCTED TO ADHERE TO THE "BALANCED" JOINT PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNIQUE OF SANTO TOMAS, ISSUED IN JANUARY. HOWEVER, HE ADDED THAT EL SALVADOR COULD NOT STAND ALONE AND APART FROM HER LATIN COLLEAGUES. WE INTERPRET THIS TO MEAN THAT EL SALVADOR MIGHT BE FORCED TO GO ALONG WITH A SOLID LATIN BLOC, IF THIS DEVELOPS, AS THEY DID IN THE OAS PERMANENT COUNCIL SPECIAL SESSION.

3. TO DATE THE GOES HAS NOT MADE A UNILATERAL PUBLIC STATEMENT CONCENTRATING ON OUR TRADE ACT. WE HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THIS ABSENCE OF PUBLIC COMMENT IS DELIBERATE AND REFLECTS A VIEW THAT UNTIL THE LATIN AMERICAN DUST SETTLES ON THIS ISSUE IT HAS NOTHING TO GAIN BY UNILATERAL PRONOUNCEMENTS. UNTIL THAT TIME IT CAN HIDE BEHIND STATEMENTS WHICH "WAFFLE", AS DID THAT OF SANTO TOMAS, AND BY SAYING THAT MANY SIGNIFICANT PARTS OF THE ACT LACK ADEQUATE LEGAL INTERPRETATION; HENCE, COMMENT WOULD BE PREMATURE. THE MINISTRIES OF ECONOMY AND FOREIGN RELATIONS, FOR THE ABOVE REASON, RECENTLY TURNED DOWN INVITATIONS TO PARTICIPATE IN A ROUND-TABLE DISCUSSION ON OUR ACT SPONSORED BY THE ECONOMIC FACULTY OF THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY.

4. FOUR OUR PART, WE BELIEVE THE MISSION HAS IMPARTED TO ALL KEY GOES OFFICIALS THE THRUST AND DETAIL OF THE MANY HELPFUL MESSAGES CONCERNING THE VARIOUS SIGNIFICANT PROVISIONS OF THE ACT. WE BELIEVE KEY CABINET OFFICIALS ARE NOW QUITE KNOWLEDGEABLE AS REGARDS THE IMPORTANT POSITIVE ASPECTS OF THE ACT. THE FOREIGN MINISTER CLAIMS TO HAVE READ IT THROUGH COMPLETELY. A WELL-FOCUSED AND POSITIVE INTERVIEW ON THE ACT WITH THE AMBASSADOR WAS CARRIED IN FULL IN THE BUSINESS-ORIENTED AFTERNOON ECONOMIC JOURNAL, EL REPORTE. THE ECONOMIC SECTION CHIEF WAS THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LUNCHEON SPEAKER FEB 5 TO A RECORD ATTENDANCE OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SALVADORAN INDUSTRIALISTS AND QUESTIONS REGARDING HIS PRESENTATION ON THE ACT PROVIDED A GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO EMPHASIZE ITS POSITIVE FEATURES AND DESTROY SOME ADVERSE MYTHS. (HE WAS THE LUNCHEON SPEAKER, AGAIN ON THE ACT, TO THE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FEBRUARY 28.) COPIES OF THE ENTIRE ACT OR ITS SUMMARY AND SUPPLEMENTARY EXPLANATORY MATERIALS HAVE BEEN PROVIDED TO APPROPRIATE GOES

MINISTRIES, TRADE ASSOCIATIONS, AND UNIVERSITIES. A COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY HAS STUDIED THE BILL, IN RESPONSE TO AN MNR OPPOSITION DEPUTY'S INTRODUCTION OF A RESOLUTION CONDEMNING IT. WE PROVIDED ALL PARTIES INVOLVED WITH THE TEXT OF THE BILL AND RELATED USG EXPLANATORY STATEMENTS AND EMBOFFS MET WITH VARIOUS DEPUTIES, INCLUDING THOSE OF THE MNR, IN AN EFFORT TO INFORM THEM AND ANSWER THEIR QUESTIONS.

5. COMMENT: AS NOTED ABOVE, GOES OFFICIALS HAVE BEEN WELL INFORMED, BUT FOR OBVIOUS REASONS, EL SALVADOR WILL NOT BE A LEADER IN THE L.A. STRATEGY FORMULATION. IT WILL MOAST CERTAINLY BE SEPT ALONG BY THE TID OF ANY LA POLITICAL CONSENSUS ON THE TRADE ACT WHICH DEVELOPS AT FORTHCOMING IA-ECOSOC MEETING AS IT HAS BEEN IN THE RECENT PAST.
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